The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society

AN EXAMINATION IN DEPTH

THE FIRST OBJECT *Helen V. Zahara*

"To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color."

In considering the meaning of our First Object it is very interesting to see how it evolved in the early days. It was not a specific object when the first rules were formulated, the only one being "To collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe." But, though not specifically stated in the object clause, the ideal of brotherhood was there in the preamble to the by-laws, where we find these words: "In considering the qualifications of applicants for membership, it [the Society] knows neither race, sex, color, country nor creed." It is important to remember what the climate was in the U.S.A. when that clause was written. It was 1875, not so long after the Civil War, when the country was still very much divided over the issue of Negro rights, and segregation was probably widely effective. Seeing it in that context it was a very important and meaningful statement to insert in the preamble–perhaps even courageous. The Society was therefore founded on the premise of brotherhood and equality. We should be very proud of that fact and ask ourselves whether we are living up to that example.

In 1878, while the Founders, Madame H. P. Blavatsky and Col. H. S. Olcott, were still in New York, Col. Olcott, the President, issued his first circular explaining the origin and plan of the Society and the aims for which it stood. We find one of the objects of the Society given as follows: "Finally and chiefly [to] aid in the institution of a Brotherhood of Humanity, wherein all good and pure men will recognize each other as the equal effects (upon this planet) of one Uncreate, Universal, Infinite, and Everlasting Cause."

We can see how the philosophical thought in the Society had already begun to shape itself. In that statement not only was there the humanitarian approach to brotherhood, but the truth of brotherhood was being recognized as a fact of existence, based on a deeply philosophical and esoteric statement that all people are equal effects of one Uncreate, Universal, Infinite, and Everlasting Cause. This same truth was presented and expanded later in *The Secret Doctrine,* but here it was now, ten years before *The Secret Doctrine* was published.

Although these aims were given in the circular issued by Col. Olcott, they were apparently not incorporated formally in the Society's rules. It was in 1879 when the Founders had gone to India that the first redraft of the rules was made, at the end of March and early April. Then a second and more extensive revision of the rules took place at Benares in December, when a meeting of the General Council of the Society was held. The Society was now actually calling itself "The Theosophical Society, or Universal Brotherhood," and Universal Brotherhood had become the Society's First Object. Its statement of Principles, Rules and By-Laws opened with these words: "The Theosophical

Society is formed upon the basis of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity." Further on, along with other declared aims, we find that the Society's plans also include "To promote a feeling of Brotherhood among nations." The Fellows of the Society at that time were divided into three sections of membership. They entered the third section as probationers. Then there was a significant requirement. Only those fellows who became "able to regard all men as equally their brothers" might pass into the Second Section. The First Section was composed "exclusively of proficients or initiates in Esoteric Science and Philosophy." These were the Teachers of Madame Blavatsky, the Adept Brothers who instructed her and stood behind the founders in the development of the Society. We see that brotherhood was considered so important that those who could not accept it could not move from the probationary to the second section. Later these divisions were dropped.

In 1881, on February 17 in Bombay, a further revision and clarification of the objects was made. The First Object had been reduced to this one sentence: "To form the Nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity."

In 1886 the First Object was amended once more to insure that there be no distinctions. It read: "To form *the* nucleus of *a* Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, or color." This was further explained in one of the accompanying rules: "The Society being formed on a basis of Universal Brotherhood inculcates perfect tolerance."

In 1888 the words "sex and caste" were added, presumably being considered especially necessary in India, where women were not then emancipated and the division of caste was still very rigid. So here we have The Theosophical Society taking a pioneer role in breaking down these barriers. Our First Object now stated: "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color."

In 1896 the final change in the First Object was made. Instead of "to form *the* nucleus" this became "*a* nucleus" and instead of "*a* Universal Brotherhood of Humanity" it became "*the* Universal Brotherhood of Humanity." Thus the articles "the" and "a" became transposed. It would be interesting to know some of the thinking that went into the evolution of the Object and the careful attention to its wording. In 1905 the Society was incorporated without any further change in the First Object, which has remained the same ever since: "To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color."

THE development of this and the other objects obviously reflected the thought of the founders and members in those early days. We must remember also that at that time the Adept Brothers (who some regard as the inner Founders of our movement, although there is no dogma about this) were giving the esoteric wisdom to the Western world, mainly through their pupil, H. P. Blavatsky, but also through their letters to A. P. Sinnett and others. We find that the teachings they gave are full of references to brotherhood and to the Society's role in exemplifying and promulgating it. Here are a few examples:

The Mahatma K. H. wrote to Mr. Sinnett: "The term 'Universal Brotherhood' is no idle phrase . . . . It is the only secure foundation for universal morality."[1] And again: "The Chiefs want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity,' a real Universal Fraternity started . . . ."[2]

In a letter to Mr. A. O. Hume, the Mahatma K.H. referred to the conditions under which occult teachings might be given: "But this consent, you will please bear in mind, was obtained solely *under the express and unalterable condition* that the new Society should be founded as a Branch of the Universal Brotherhood."[3] The wording of this particular letter raises an interesting question. Is the reference to the Society's being "a Branch of the Universal Brotherhood" a hint of its possible inner link with the Adept Brotherhood, which is universal in its nature? Apart from that, of course, there is the clear intention that the Society is established on the basis of universal brotherhood. Another striking point is that even now all charters for branches and national societies issued from our international headquarters have the following heading: "THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD." This is in spite of the fact that the legal name is simply "The Theosophical Society."

To refer again to *The Mahatma Letters,* in the early years the appearance of letters from the Teachers of H. P. B. and the phenomena

which H. P. B. herself was able to produce, were attracting many people who were interested only in occult knowledge or who were excited by phenomena and not by any altruistic motives. It was made clear by our leaders and by the Mahatmas that the Society was not founded to be a hall of magic and that only those who could grasp the idea of brotherhood could be entrusted with the deeper esoteric knowledge, thus using it for the benefit of mankind and not for themselves. The Mahatma M. made this very clear in a letter to Mr. Sinnett in 1882:

> The situation is this: men who join the Society with the one selfish object of reaching power, making occult science their only or even chief aim may as well not join it—they are doomed to disappointment as much as those who commit the mistake of letting them believe that the Society is nothing else. It is just because they preach too much "the Brothers" and too little if at all *Brotherhood* that they fail.[4]

There are many such references to be found in the Letters. I cannot quote them all but will quote from just one more. This is the famous one from the Mahatma K. H. to A. P. Sinnett, where he gives the views of the Maha Chohan, 1881 or 1882:

> The white race must be the first to stretch out the hand of fellowship to the dark nations, to call the poor despised "nigger" brother. This prospect may not smile at all, but he is no Theosophist who objects to this principle . . . . If Theosophists say . . . the lower classes and the inferior races . . . cannot concern us and must manage as they can, what becomes of our fine profession of benevolence, philanthropy, reform, etc.? . . . Rather perish the T.S. with both its hapless Founders than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic, a hall of occultism.[5]

It was obvious from these and other examples that the Society had a special role to play in demonstrating within itself and in its work the goal of brotherhood as a principle, an ideal, and a reality.

While these letters were being received, H. P. B. was herself speaking in a similar vein. In an article written in 1886 entitled "The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society" she referred to the objects of the Society as follows:

1. Universal Brotherhood
2. No distinctions to be made by the member between races, creeds or social positions . . . .[6]

(There were other aims also.)

In a letter addressed to Mr. W. Q. Judge, General Secretary of the American Section, for the Second American Convention, held in Chicago April 22-23, 1888, H. P. B. wrote, among other things:

> On the day when Theosophy will have accomplished its most holy and most important mission—namely to unite firmly a body of men of all nations in brotherly love, bent on a purely altruistic work, not on a labor with selfish motives—on that day only will Theosophy become higher than any nominal brotherhood of man. This will be a wonder and a miracle, truly, for the realization of which Humanity is vainly waiting for the last 18 centuries, and which every association has hitherto failed to accomplish.[7]

H. P. B. was accompanying her words with actions, as was her co-founder Col. Olcott along with others. Their proclamation of brotherhood in India was making a tremendous impact. At that time there was a division among the Europeans and Indians, among the different sects, religions and castes. Here came two people from the West proclaiming the brotherhood of man, of races and of religions, not afraid to speak out. H. P. B. wrote in *Lucifer*, September 1889:

> When we arrived in India, in February 1879, there was no unity between the races and sects of the Peninsula, no sense of a common public interest, no disposition to find the mutual relation between the several sects of ancient Hinduism, or that between them and the creeds of Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism. Between the Brahmanical Hindus of India and their kinsmen, the modern Sinhalese Buddhists, there had been no religious intercourse since some remote epoch . . . . As for any international reciprocity, in either social or religious affairs, between the Sinhalese and the Northern Buddhistic nations, such a thing

had never existed . . . . Finally, between the races of Asia and those of Europe and America there was the most complete absence of sympathy as to religious and philosophical questions . . . it will be seen how difficult a task it must have been to bring something like harmony out of this chaos, and make a tolerance if not a friendly feeling spring up and banish these hatreds, evil suspicions, ill feelings, and mutual ignorance.

H. P. B. then tells what was done in the ten years that followed their arrival in India—the unprecedented gatherings of races, castes, and sects, both in India and Ceylon, the rapid growth of theosophical literature advocating their altruistic views, and then the carrying of the same message to Japan, which she described as ranking "among the most dramatic events in history." She stated that it was "the all sufficient, unanswerable and crowning proof of the vital reality of our scheme to beget the feeling of Universal Brotherhood among all peoples, races, kindreds, castes and colours."[8]

I am not suggesting that this scheme came to full fruition. If it had we would not be in the sorry state in which we find our world today, and our Society itself would be more vital in its expression of brotherhood. Yet there was no doubt that the Society and its leaders had made a profound impact, they were stirring people to a realization of their interdependence. There was a pioneer and historic effort to break down sectarian, caste, racial, and color boundaries. (Their humanitarian work was carried on, in India in particular, by the second President of the Society, Dr. Annie Besant, and her co-workers.)

D. L. Murray, former editor of the London *Times Literary Supplement,* in an address to the London Branch of the Indian Institute of Culture, on May 8, 1953, recognized this marvelous contribution of our early leaders. He referred to universal brotherhood as "the most living of all issues," and said:

> And writing at a period, the 1870's and the 1880's, when the idea of a large-scale international unity was very faint, when indeed the relative poverty of communications made the people of the earth far more widely separate than they can possibly be today, it was the leaders of the Theosophical Movement who put their finger upon what was to prove the most urgent need of the future, the *one creative idea for world politics.*[9]

While this humanitarian effort was continuing, the stream of esoteric teaching on the nature of man and his relationship with the universe was also being published. A metaphysical system was emerging which gave the rationale for brotherhood as being a reality of existence as well as a philanthropic aim and ideal. In October 1879, in the first issue of *The Theosophist*, H. P. B. writing of the spirit of living nature, referred to:

> That *Presence* the Invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent, and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there, and everywhere and nowhere; is ALL, and NOTHING; ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything; contained in all.

In 1888 H. P. B. published her magnum opus, *The Secret Doctrine*, which laid out the basic principles on which the whole edifice of esoteric teaching is built. In the Proem we find the clear statement that there is "ONE LIFE, eternal, invisible, yet omnipresent, without beginning or end . . . the one self-existing Reality."[10] In the third proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* we find this basic concept: "The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul—a spark of the former—through the Cycle of Incarnation, or Necessity, in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term."[11] So there we have it. Man—according to this statement—is actually identical with the Universal Oversoul, which is an aspect of the Unknown Root. This is brotherhood in its ultimate meaning.

But despite this identity of every soul with the Oversoul, the One Divine Consciousness, it is clearly stated that every individual is embarked on a pilgrimage and is governed by the law of karma, of action and reaction, cause and effect. Each one is evolving by the process of reincarnation in an ever increasing spiral toward a state of complete unfoldment. Man is a god in the becoming, a miniature universe, he is a microcosm of the Macrocosm and his poten-

tialities are beyond our possible imagining.

The Secret Doctrine elaborates upon the whole process of universal unfoldment in which all forms are involved. It is stated that each unit, including man, is a part of a great evolving whole, is an expression of and subject to the same universal laws. All are links in an endless chain of existence with no apparent beginning and no apparent end.

But now a problem arises, and here some of our troubles begin. In elaborating the evolutionary path of man and his many cycles, *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Mahatma Letters* introduce the idea of a septenary law. We learn that from the One emanate seven primordial rays. There are seven basic forces in nature, seven principles or differentiations of matter, which form seven planes of existence, and corresponding to these are seven states of consciousness. This septenary law is also manifest in man, in whom the seven rays are reflected. Man is described as a *saptaparna,* a seven-leafed lotus. Each petal is a principle which must be fully unfolded in order to come to the flowering of the perfect man. There is also introduced the idea of seven Root-Races, each with its own seven sub-races. Each Root-Race is said to be a phase of human unfoldment in which a new sense is developed, and a new level of consciousness.

It was unfortunate that the term "root-race" was chosen to describe these phases, as it has led to a great deal of misunderstanding, which still exists. The term "root-race" has often been confused with the general use of the term "race." It seems that there was no nomenclature to describe the developmental phases when the teachings were being given by the Mahatmas, for in Letter No. 14 received by Mr. A. O. Hume from the Mahatma K. H. in July 1881 there is this phrase: "M. advised Mr. Sinnett strongly to agree upon a nomenclature before going any further."[12]

In Letter No. 12 to Mr. Sinnett the Mahatma M. wrote: "By the bye, you ought to come to some agreement as to the terms used when discussing cyclic evolutions. Our terms are untranslatable . . . ."[13]

In Letter No. 13 the Mahatma K.H. is apparently not satisfied with the use of the word "race" which he capitalized in this passage: "The present mankind is at its *fourth* round (mankind as a genus or a kind not a RACE *nota bene)* of the *post-pralayan* cycle of evolution . . . ."[14]

In another passage, when writing on the question of racial evolution to Mr. Hume, the Mahatma K.H. says: "It is possible that my nomenclature is faulty; you are at liberty in such a case to change it."[15]

Unfortunately the term was not changed. It was adopted and carried over into *The Secret Doctrine* and later literature. This would have been all right if the definition of the term had been clarified and it had kept to its original concept of each root-race relating to a new phase of human evolution in which the whole of mankind shared—that is the unfoldment of each new sense and level of consciousness. There crept in, however, other connotations. Each root-race became identified with specific ethnic groups, and so we find that people became labeled, pigeonholed and stereotyped because of their ethnic background and the color of their skin, and this led to the danger of unconscious racism becoming injected into our wonderful philosophy. It has in fact been used by some to justify their racist views, and the real meaning of the unfoldment of each man as a god in the becoming has been overlaid with concepts not befitting a brotherhood organization. There has been too much emphasis on the distinctions and differences of forms instead of on the unity of the spiritual selves within.

LET us look briefly at the basic teaching of the root-races as far as the development of man is concerned, and see whether the root-race characteristics apply to the whole of humanity or just a part of it. If they apply to the whole of humanity then all humanity shares in the developmental phases and the characteristics of all root-races unfolded so far are in all men, irrespective of race or color or ethnic background. This is not to say that there are not different stages of unfoldment for individuals within all ethnic groups. It would be absurd to say that we are all exactly alike.

According to the esoteric teaching, the First Root-Race began to bring into activity the first sense, that of hearing. This was non-physical so it must have been a rudimentary sense on the astral or etheric plane. In the Second Root-Race was awakened the second sense, that of touch. This was still only formative and ethereal. These first two Root-Races began to develop

the capacity to comprehend sensation and perception.

It is stated that only during the Third-Root-Race, known as the Lemurian, about eighteen million years ago, physical man with a bony structure as we know him today was evolved. There occurred the beginning of mentality, the development of emotion, the separation of the sexes, the development of speech, and the sense of sight. In the Fourth Root-Race, the Atlantean, there was said to be the development of lower mind and the sense of taste. The Fifth Root-Race has seen the awakening of the higher mind and the sense of smell. It is said that the Sixth Root-Race will develop intuition and the sense of clairvoyance. In the Seventh Root-Race will come the faculty of direct perception and the sense of clairaudience. These are part of man's latent faculties.

It does seem that the focus of each developmental phase or root-race has been among certain groups of peoples. It is as if a searchlight had rested in one area but from there had spread out to include all. So the cradle of the Lemurian Root-Race is said to have been in the Pacific Ocean and to have stretched through what is now Central Africa. The Fourth Root-Race, we are told, had its cradle in Atlantis and reached its peak about a million years ago. The Fifth Root-Race, the Aryan or Indo-European, is said to have arisen in Central Asia. It is only now in its fifth sub-race. We can see that we are today in the age of science, which is related to the development of the mind. This is expressed through the wonders of technology, culminating in the journey to the moon. But because technology has developed in the West, and is perhaps most evident here in the United States of America, this does not mean that other peoples do not have the same potentialities, given the circumstances. There are people from Africa and from Asia who are great scientists and thinkers. China has developed the nuclear bomb, which may not please us, but this shows that technology is becoming developed there. Japan is fast rising as one of the industrial giants. So the technological mind does not belong to just one ethnic group, though a particular culture may give it more emphasis. H. P. B. makes it clear that there is an enormous overlapping of one root-race over the root-race that succeeds it, and the older root-races take on the characteristics of the younger. As she puts it: "The Races, sub-races, etc., down to their smallest ramifications, overlap and are entangled with each other until it is nearly impossible to separate them."[16]

Unfortunately even H. P. B. in some passages equates root-races with ethnic groups and we find some of these ideas perpetuated in later literature. For instance some of the African people and the Australian Aborigines are described as remnants of the last descendants of the Third Root-Race. References are made to the Australian Aborigines as dying out and this is even today given as an example of the extinction of the Third Root-Race, since the egos have passed into more evolved bodies. We have to remember that when H. P. B. was writing *The Secret Doctrine*, communication with Australia was very slow, distances were great, and knowledge about the Australian Aborigines was limited. With the coming of the white settlers the Aborigines were pushed out of their traditional tribal lands, they were massacred and ill-treated, just as were the American Indians. Naturally they were beginning to die out. But now the situation has changed. Their numbers are increasing, and their population is expected to double by the end of this decade. I mention this because sometimes we take some of the statements in our literature as absolute truth and repeat them without looking into the real facts as they are today. H. P. B. may have been supporting the teaching of the root-races with scientific knowledge of her day but what she said then regarding the decreasing numbers is no longer correct. So we have to look at the subject again and see what is really meant by the Australian Aborigines (and African tribes and others) being remnants of descendants of the Third Root-Race. Since it is 18 million years, we are told, since the Third Root-Race was flourishing, obviously the descendants of those people are not the same as their ancestors were. In fact, H. P. B. states:

> When therefore . . . we speak of men who inhabited this Globe 18,000,000 years ago, we have in mind neither the men of our present races nor the present atmospheric laws, thermal conditions, etc.[17]

The descendants of the Third Root Race have evolved and have changed along with the rest of humanity. They have, as *The Secret Doctrine* states, taken on the characteristics of

the later root-races. Let us follow this thought with a little logic, and see if it is true. As has been said, the first three root-races developed the senses of hearing, touch, and sight. Since the Australian Aborigines have these senses we will agree that they are at least Third Root-Race. The Fourth Root-Race, which goes back more than one million years, is said to have developed taste. The Aborigines have this sense so they have also this Fourth Root-Race quality. The Fifth Root-Race, over some thousands of years, has developed smell and this sense also exists with the Australian Aborigines and with the Africans. So they also have the Fifth Root-Race qualities. These senses have nothing to do with color. Another statement made in *The Secret Doctrine* is that "the Humanities developed coordinately, and on parallel lines with the four Elements, every new Race being physiologically adapted to meet the additional Element."[18] Here again we must say that all men living today are adapted to the four elements so we cannot separate one group from another on this basis.

I am not trying to say that the Australian Aborigines have the technology of the Western civilization. From that point of view they may be described as primitive, still living close to nature. We must remember that they were isolated for thousands of years. But that does not mean they have not developed intelligence and a culture of their own, with art and religion and moral standards. It is well known that they do have these. Yet observe what appears in some of our theosophical books. Here, for instance, is a quote from *Popular Lectures* by Annie Besant:

> Let us look at a primeval savage and try for a moment to realize what he is. Take any savage of the lowest type; the aborigines of Australia, the Veddhas of Ceylon, the hairy men of Borneo—these are scarcely human, yet they are human; their language is more of signs and of sounds expressive of emotion than of words, it really is little better than the language of an ape that some have learned to reproduce. Try to realize him mentally and morally; he has practically no mind and no morals, only the germs of them.[19]

Now consider this quotation from the book *The Dreamtime - Australian Aboriginal Myths* with text by Charles P. Mountford:

> From the standpoint of material possessions the aborigines of Australia are, without doubt, the poorest of any people. This material poverty has led to the mistaken impression that, as the white man uses so many, and the aborigines so few tools with which to gain a livelihood, the aborigines must have the lesser intelligence. But this idea is completely refuted on an examination of the success of the food-gathering of the aborigines in the almost waterless deserts of central Australia, a country so arid that no white man can live there unless he takes his own food. Yet, with no more than five tools, the aborigines have been able to live and multiply in this harsh and unfriendly country for many centuries. This is surely evidence not only of normal intelligence, but of minds intensely trained in the lore of the desert, and in the knowledge of its food resources . . . . To meet these conditions, the natives must acquire a profound knowledge of the rhythm of their country . . . . The aborigines have also developed a calendar, based on the movements of the heavenly bodies, the flowering of certain trees and grasses, the mating calls of the local birds, and the arrival of the migrant ones.[20]

In the UNESCO publication on *Aboriginal Paintings* from Australia, also by Charles P. Mountford, we find some valuable information on the cultural and aesthetic values of the Aborigines:

> Even in the forbidding deserts they succeed in gaining not only an adequate livelihood but also sufficient leisure to follow a rich aesthetic and ceremonial life, in which they commemorate their philosophies concerning the origin of their world . . . . An intimate knowledge of the mythical stories concerning [creation] is transmitted from one generation of aborigines to the next by means of the art, music and drama of their ceremonial life . . .[21]

Then he makes this important statement which I think we could well remember when evaluating some of the statements in our literature about the Aborigines and other descendants of the Third Root-Race:

> It has been asserted by some that men and women living at this stage of development are almost devoid of artistic appreciation, their thoughts rising little higher than the gathering of food and the perpetuation of their species. The research of others, however, has shown that primitive man, of which the Australian Aborigine is an excellent example, is as sensitive in the creation of beauty, particularly the beauty of the graphic arts, as is any other race.[22]

Now what root race would you say has a monopoly on an appreciation of beauty and art and drama? Is technology superior or is it just another phase of human activity? We must not equate any of these accomplishments with superiority or inferiority. They are all part of the qualities which all men must develop to reach their full potentiality.

To refer again to this idea of overlapping and the older races taking on the qualities of the newer ones, there are numerous examples of Australian Aborigines producing beautiful paintings in the style of Western art (apart from their own traditional art style). I myself have two color prints of Australian landscapes painted by Albert Namatjira, a full-blooded Australian Aborigine of the Aranda Tribe.* These paintings reveal a sense of color, form, proportion, and beauty which exceeds that of many people of so-called "civilized" cultures. We certainly cannot say that they are produced from a consciousness that is little more than an animal. Rather, I would suggest they are expressions of the fifth developmental phase of consciousness.

I believe that we have committed some very grave and hurtful errors in our interpretation of the very mysterious subject of root-races, and I suggest that the time has come for a re-evaluation of our understanding of this teaching. I do not mean we should throw it out, because obviously it is an integral part of the occult system, but we need to dig into it more and see what it really means. As Geoffrey Barborka has said in the February 1970 issue of *The American Theosophist:*

> The term "Races" is responsible for confusion on the subject. The word does not convey the meaning intended, especially when the prefix "Root" is omitted–as very often happens. For that matter, the ethnic connotation destroys what Theosophists mean by "Root Races."

In considering this subject I deliberately chose to speak of the Australian Aborigines, because I could then remove the discussion away from our emotional biases and prejudices. We need, however, to relate this discussion to our race problems nearer at hand and to make sure that we do not ever think of someone of another color or of another so-called race or ethnic group as not having the same potentialities as we ourselves have, of thinking that some are inferior while others are superior. Obviously, within all groups there are some who are more spiritually mature than others, but this maturity has nothing to do with the color of skin or the ethnic background. As H. P. B. says, "the reason given for dividing humanity into *superior* and *inferior* races falls to the ground and becomes a fallacy."[23]

Let us think, then, of every root-race as a phase in human unfoldment in which we all share and experience. How wondrous is the concept in its larger sense. In *Talks on the Path of Occultism,* Vol. I, Annie Besant says:

> This is a thing that aspirants to the Path should never forget, for unless it is lived, you are still very far from the Portal. There is no one will ask what your race is, or your creed, but only what you have added to your character in the way of qualities . . . .

She continues:

> Each race has its part to play in the harmony; each contributes its share to the mighty whole . . . if people understood this, they would be less prone to foolish pride of race, and criticism of other races.[24]

In dealing with this subject I have not even touched on the modern scientific view of race. Let me just say that it is now acknowledged that all men today belong to the same species and descend from the same stock. This species is *Homo sapiens.* There is only one race, the human race, even though within the species anthropology recognizes various ethnological groups. Yet these are all part of mankind and their external differences are only relative.

We have been accused by some of presenting Theosophy as from the head rather than from the heart. Is it because of this that our

*One of these prints was displayed during the presentation of this talk.

Society seems to talk a lot about brotherhood and yet its voice is not heard loud and clear? Are we hiding behind our neutrality and freedom of thought and thus failing, at a time when the world is torn by racial prejudice as well as religious strife and warfare, to make our First Object a reality? Our First Object, as we have discussed, seeks a brotherhood which transcends race, creed, and color. Therefore I cannot help but ask myself why the Society is not in the forefront of a world-wide effort to break down racism and a really creative effort to work for brotherhood. Where are our love, our concern, our compassion? The Mahatma K.H. spoke of the Adepts' immense love for humanity–as a Whole! "For it is 'Humanity' which is the great Orphan."

The occult teachings, while giving the wonderful outline of the evolutionary scheme, are full of appeal to the heart. Do you remember those words in *The Voice of the Silence:*

> Let not the fierce sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer's eye. But let each burning human tear drop on thy heart and there remain; nor ever brush it off until the pain that caused it is removed . . . . These tears, O thou of heart most merciful, these are the streams that irrigate the fields of charity immortal.

Our President, N. Sri Ram, has said: "To open one's heart, to become resistance-less, and barrier-less, is the means of true understanding, as well as of pouring out any possible help. Let the kingdom of your heart be so wide that no one is excluded."

Asked about the future prospects of The Theosophical Society, H. P. B. pointed out the danger of the Society's degenerating into a sect. But if this danger be averted, she says,

> Then the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty and Philanthropy. Slowly, but surely, it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices; it will break down racial and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realization of the Brotherhood of all men.[25]

There is our First Object and its meaning in a nutshell.

In discussing the First Object of our Society, I have dealt with it to a large extent from the point of view of occult concepts in our literature, because this literature plays such a vital part in our work and in the development of our understanding of the nature of man and the universe. But of course all true understanding must lead to action, for without the practical expression of brotherhood, all our study is of little value.

Our Society can be a nucleus for the brotherhood of man, for the brotherhood of the spirit, and for the Universal Brotherhood of Just Men Made Perfect, whose influence and aid the world so greatly needs. But only to the extent that we as individuals are peaceful and harmonious can we ourselves and our Society be channels for the forces of unity and love.

I would like to close by reading a short poem. It is entitled, "I Dream a World" by Langston Hughes, an American Negro.

> I dream a world where man
> No other will scorn,
> Where love will bless the earth
> And peace its paths adorn.
> I dream a world where all
> Will know sweet freedom's way,
> Where greed no longer saps the soul
> Nor avarice blights our day.
> A world I dream where black or white,
> Whatever race you be,
> Will share the bounties of the earth
> And every man is free,
> Where wretchedness will hang its head,
> And joy, like a pearl,
> Attend the needs of all mankind.
> Of such I dream–
> Our world!

References

1. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett,* Transcribed and Compiled by A. T. Barker, 3rd ed., p. 17.
2. *ibid.,* p. 24.
3. *ibid.,* p. 207
4. *ibid.,* p. 248
5. *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom,* ed. by C. Jinarajadasa, First Series, p. 2.
6. *The Theosophist,* June 1924.
7. Report of Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society, American Section.
8. *Lucifer,* September 1889.

9. *The Aryan Path,* August 1953.
10. *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky, Adyar ed., vol. 1, p. 70.
11. *ibid.*, p. 82.
12. Barker, *op cit.*, p. 80.
13. *ibid.*, p. 70.
14. *ibid.*, p. 76
15. *ibid.*, p. 82
16. Blavatsky, *op cit,* p. 432.
17. *ibid.*, p. 333.
18. *ibid.*, p. 144;
19. *Popular Lectures,* The Theosophical Publishing House, 1948, p. 44.
20. Pub. by Rigby Ltd., Adelaide.
21. Fortuna Unesco Art Books.
22. *ibid.*
23. Blavatsky, *op cit.*,,p. 423.
24. 1947 ed., p. 66;
25. *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky, Section xiv, Conclusion.

THE SECOND OBJECT, *Felix Layton*

"To encourage the study of Comparative, Religion, Philosophy and Science."

The Three Objects of The Theosophical Society make its members seekers for truth who believe in brotherhood.

While the First Object defines the basic attitude necessary for the successful search, the Second and Third define the fields of search. These fields are: the *known,* the field of already acquired knowledge studied under our Second Object, and the *unknown,* studied under the Third Object.

One would expect that, in studying, the number of things known would get greater and greater while the field of the unknown would steadily get smaller. Neither of these seems to happen. In what we (perhaps overenthusiastically) call the "knowledge explosion" people are changing from trying to learn an ever-increasing number of facts, to learning the far fewer principles from which all the facts can readily be derived. This is very true of wisdom obtained by a study of our classical theosophical literature.

The point is well illustrated by a story about Colonel H. S. Olcott, the President Founder of The Theosophical Society. In the early days, while he was lecturing in India, it was observed that he would frequently be asked questions dealing with the meaning of abstruse passages in the Zoroastrian, Sikh, or other scriptures, which he had never studied. The Colonel always seemed able to answer to the satisfaction of his questioners. He admitted it was true that he had not studied these scriptures, but he said that he *had* studied Theosophy deeply, and he explained that when you understand the principles of Theosophy it is easy to see the significance of such details as these people had brought up and to explain their meaning.

And as for the field of the unknown getting smaller, the unknown–ultimate truth, the mystery of the universe–is infinite and man may take as much as he can from this infinite mystery and bring it into the field of the known. But the unknown, the mystery beyond, still remains infinite. It is a good exercise in humility for students of Theosophy to remember this!

The word "comparative" in the Second Object is significant. The Theosophical Society has made a great contribution in the field of comparative religions, for while–especially at the turn of the century–most studies were made on the assumption that the student's own religion was superior to all others, those made by members of The Theosophical Society have always been pursued on the assumption that the Divine Wisdom is found in every religion, and such students have sought to discover the great principles which underlie and are common to all of them.

But the Second Object means much more than just to study comparative religion, to study philosophy, and to study science. It means to study *comparatively* the great underlying truths found in religion, philosophy, and science, and to discover the still more fundamental realities and principles which underlie and are common to them all.

It has been suggested that art should be added to the three fields of study so that the Second Object would read, "To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, science, and art." This suggestion, which is considered later, has not been adopted.

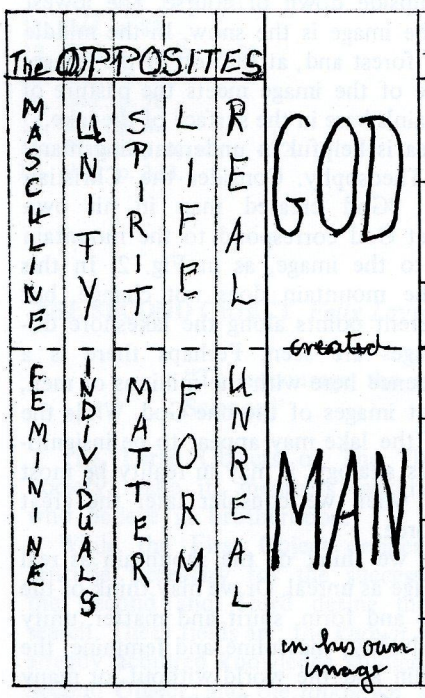

Fig 3

Fig 2

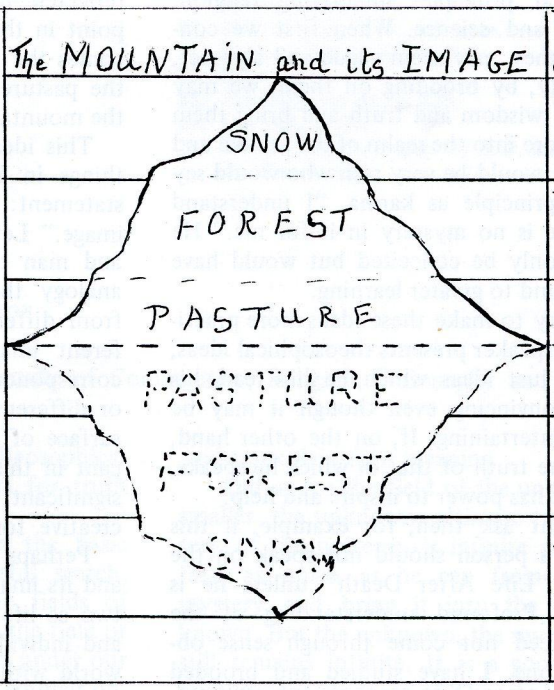

Fig. 1

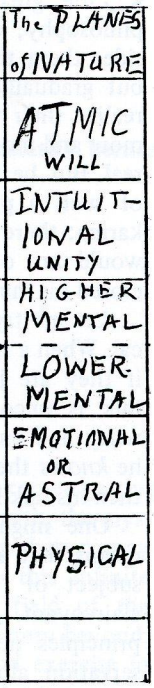

Fig 4

	RAYS	2nd. OBJECT	MEDITATION on the ELEMENTS
OMNIPOTENCE	①	SCIENCE	ETHER
OMNIPRESENCE	②	RELIGION — TRANSCENDENT	AIR
OMNISCIENCE	③	PHILOSOPHY	FIRE from above
MAN	④	ART	
ANIMAL	⑤	PHILOSOPHY	FIRE from below
PLANT	⑥	RELIGION — FORMAL	WATER
MINERAL	⑦	SCIENCE	EARTH

Fig 5 Fig 7 Fig 6 Fig 8

the human kingdom it slowly pushes into the upper worlds of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence whose reflections it experienced in the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms. Some may say that, in Fig. 5, the positions of omniscience and omnipresence should be changed.

HOW do these reflections and correspondences relate to our Second Object? Science definitely starts at the bottom, testing everything by physical matter, even in such sciences as parapsychology. But physical matter reflects and is linked to Atma, highest spirit. In the language of science, perhaps force and energy are the terms whose meanings come closest to Atma, of which matter is the reflection. Science seeks to control matter and to overcome its inertia; and it is significant that it is in the heart of matter that science has found almost unlimited energy—nuclear energy—the one thing which can irresistibly overcome and even dissolve matter and its inertia. Perhaps nuclear energy corresponds to Atma or will, and is the first step toward transcendent science.

Similarly, religion in its early stages is an emotional thing—the devotee giving devotion to one and sometimes hatred to another, and all at the emotional or astral level. Later, religion grows from a personal thing to an awareness of the immanence of God in all, as it reaches the buddhic level of which the astral is a reflection. So also philosophy exercises the mind first on separatist ideas of the lower mind before it breaks through to the synthesizing thoughts of the higher mind. And art perhaps corresponds to the reflecting surface which, of itself, is nothing, but through which everything passes (Fig. 6).

Correspondences may also exist between the seven rays or lifestreams prominently discussed in theosophical literature (Fig. 7). Perhaps:

The first ray, that of the leader, corresponds to Atma, pure will and is reflected in the seventh ray, where will expresses itself in perfect physical action through the ceremonialist.

The second ray, the ray of the saint, corresponds to Buddhi, awareness of the unity of all life and is reflected in the sixth ray where devotion is intensely directed to one object.

The third ray, that of the sage, corresponds to the wisdom of higher Manas, the synthesizing mind, and is reflected in the fifth ray, corresponding to lower Manas so fully developed in the scientist.

And what about the fourth ray? It is that of the artist, the harmonizer between all of them, corresponding perhaps to the reflecting surface of the lake.

There is a correspondence between the five planes (Fig. 4) and the five elements, which some have found helpful in meditation (Fig.8). To use it:

First, think of the element earth in all its forms; try to feel its essence or "earthness" and you may sense the essence of the physical world.

Then think of the element water in all its forms and try to feel its essence or "waterness" and you may sense the essence of the astral world.

Then think of the element fire in all its forms, fire from the heart of earth below, fire from above, from the sun; try to feel its essence or "fireness" and you may sense the essence of the lower and higher mental worlds.

Then think of the element air in all its forms and try to feel its essence or "airness" and you may sense the essence of the Buddhic world.

Finally, think of the element ether, the mysterious element which silently interpenetrates all the other elements; try to feel the essence of this mysterious element and you may contact the essence of the Atmic world.

By seeking to understand the essence of these elements one blends one's consciousness with successively higher realms of nature.*

But what is real and what is unreal? Many people have a tendency to say that the higher is real and the lower is its reflection and unreal. But this is often not so. Consider for example a clock which is objective and real and which keeps good time. In my mind there is an idea of the clock. It is a reflection of the clock on higher planes. If this subtler image from my mind were materialized it might produce something which would look like a clock outwardly, but it would not work or keep time because

* For a fuller development of this meditation see the Quest Book, *Theosophy: Key to Understanding* by Eunice and Felix Layton, pp. 118-120.

the mental image is incomplete so far as the wheels and springs and their relationships are concerned. In this case, then, the physical object is more real than the mental image. There are many such cases where the denser is more real and is reflected in a less real image above, as though the mountain and its image in Fig. 1 had changed places.

Perhaps the great primal force of creation may be thought of as that which causes the mountain and its image to emerge simultaneously, up and down, from the no-thing-ness of the surface of the lake. For the surface of the lake is a no-thing. Thereafter, a great force of attraction between the two drives the process of evolution. Another name for this force of attraction which exists between all opposites and at all levels, and which is the driving force of evolution, is love. It is not a force felt by one for the other, but a force which *each* of the pairs of opposites feels for the other. Thus it is the force which spirit and matter *each* feels for the other. It is the force which the manifest, and the unmanifest, the masculine and the feminine, the self and the not-self, *each* feels for the other.

Students often talk of the goal of evolution as the final triumph of life over form. But the goal is a triumph obtained equally by life and form. They find mutual perfection as spirit becomes able to express itself perfectly through matter and as matter becomes able to mold itself into a channel so perfect that spirit is drawn to a spontaneous and unrestricted expression through matter.

Evolution, driven to creation by the attraction of opposites–or love–is often represented in myth and legend by a story of a god, symbolizing spirit, loving a maiden, symbolizing matter. Outwardly the story usually shows the god actively pursuing the maiden who does nothing except get caught. Apparently all the love and action is on his part. But most romances do not work this way at all. Outwardly the god, the male or spirit aspect, may do all the chasing while the maiden, or matter aspect, does not show her feelings and is outwardly completely unaware whether she is noticed or not. But she is very much aware; she has at least equally strong feelings and, by a thousand hidden but carefully contrived artifices, is at least equally responsible for the god falling in love and pursuing her. In the same way, the consummation of evolution is not the triumph of spirit over matter but their mutual fulfilment in a mutual embrace of love.

Perhaps when you see beauty in nature and thrill to it, it is because your physical body, through its senses, provides a channel through which matter may reveal her beauty to the spirit and draw it into expression through her. When spirit and matter thus meet through you, the resultant ecstasy is that of pure love: deep joy both to spirit and to matter.

THE THIRD OBJECT, *Joy Mills*

> "To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man."

It is useful, at the outset, to review briefly the history of our Third Object. We have had outstanding presentations on the first two Objects and something of their background has been indicated, but I would like now to relate that background more specifically to the Third Object, so that we may understand the developments that led to its present wording and perhaps something of the intent behind the inclusion of this Object among the purposes for which the Society exists.

As has already been mentioned, the By-Laws of the fledgling Society in 1875 specified only one objective: "To collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe." The Third Object may be said to have been contained or implied in the original main and sole object of the Society. We may recall that the meeting at which the actual suggestion for the formation of a Society – later named The Theosophical Society–occurred, was a gathering of some 17 people in H.P.B.'s rooms at 46 Irving Place, New York City, on the evening of September 7, 1875. These people had come together to hear a highly instructive lecture by Mr. George H. Felt, an engineer and architect, who spoke on "The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptions." Felt showed, in the course

of his talk, how upon a certain temple wall a star of perfection could be inscribed, within which the whole secret of geometrical progression could be read; the hieroglyphics outside the star were only blinds to deceive the curious. Mrs. Josephine Ransom, in her history of the Society, summarizes Felt's lecture and points out that Felt decided he had discovered that the Egyptian priests were "Adepts in magical science and had the power to evoke and employ the spirits of the elements." Felt further declared that it was his view that by following out certain formulae discovered in Egypt he could translate or transform his mind into another state so that he too might see the figures he had described as being on the temple walls.[1]

I mention all this to indicate the kind of meeting at which the groundwork was laid for the establishment of the Society; in fact, so far as the outer history of the founding of the Society is concerned, the type of lecture given by Felt was presumed to be the basis upon which further investigation and study might be pursued. At the very outset, therefore, certain fundamental principles were set forth, notably the idea of a law of correspondences, which H.P.B. later developed so superbly in *The Secret Doctrine,* and the concept that there is an Ageless Wisdom, the thread of which can be traced through all cultures and mythologies, through religion, philosophy, science, as beautifully suggested by our Second Object.

In a circular printed for the Information of Correspondents in 1878, it was stated that: "The Objects of the Society are various . . . to acquire an intimate knowledge of natural law . . . study to develop his latent powers . . . exemplify the highest morality and religious aspiration . . . to make known among Western Nations . . . *facts* about Oriental religious philosophies . . . disseminate a knowledge of that pure esoteric system of the archaic period, and finally and chiefly, aid in the institution of a Brotherhood of Humanity . . . " In 1879, following the removal of the chief founders from New York to Bombay, the Rules of the Society were redrafted, and we find among the Objects one stating: "To seek to obtain knowledge of all the laws of Nature and aid in diffusing it; and especially to encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people and so termed the Occult Sciences." In 1881, the Objects were again restated, this time with a fourth Object which read: "To explore the hidden mysteries of Nature and the latent powers of Man, on which the Founders believe that Oriental philosophy is in a position to throw light."

By 1886, the Objects were threefold, approaching the form in which we now have them, with the final one reading: "A Third Object, pursued by a portion of the members of the Society, is to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers of man." Two years later, in 1888, the word "psychical" was changed to "psychic," but it is interesting to note that in that year (1888) a statement appears following the presentation of the Objects, which refers to another development in the Society to which we must give attention: "The Fellows interested in this Third Object now form a distinct private division of the Society under the direction of the corresponding secretary." This, of course, refers to the establishing of the Esoteric Section of the Society, under the direction of H.P.B. As the Preliminary Memorandum of the Esoteric Section of The Theosophical Society, as it was then called, is now public property, appearing in print in that marvelous little book, *The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society* by H. P. Blavatsky, we may refer to it in order to follow further the development of the ideas and concepts behind the Third Object itself.[2]

IT is useful to note the ideas H.P.B. had in mind in establishing this particular "section" of the Society, as she referred to it, and to which attention was directed within the Society itself by the Third Object. In the Preliminary Memorandum, H.P.B. stated: "This degree of the Esoteric Section is probationary and its general purpose is to prepare and fit the student for the study of practical Occultism or Raja Yoga." She then continues: ". . . the individual must have thoroughly mastered the knowledge of Self." H.P.B. states further that "The value of the work of this Section to the individual member will depend entirely upon, first, the person's power to assimilate the teachings and make them a part of his being; and second, upon the unselfishness of the motives with which he seeks for this knowledge, that is to say, upon whether he has entered this Section determined to work for humanity, or with only the desire to benefit or gain something for him-

self alone." I would like to stress this point, because it seems to me that the Three Objects are all very closely interwoven and all of them hark back to that central purpose of the Society set forth in the First Object, which is to feel such concern for humanity that we are indeed engaged upon the task of forming a nucleus of universal brotherhood; that we are not working for ourselves or for our own personal advancement, nor do we gain knowledge for ourselves, but all of our efforts, including the acquisition of knowledge, must be directed toward that primary aim of serving suffering humanity.

So H.P.B. continued in her Preliminary Memorandum: "He who wants to follow the working of his inner self and nature . . . has to strive to fathom the mysteries of the human heart in general before he can hope to learn the whole truth about the mysteries of his own soul. The power of Occult self-introspection is too limited in its area if it does not go beyond the self . . ." We are continually reminded throughout the literature, particularly the writings of this early period of our history, that the purpose of our studies is to come to that wisdom of the universal processes and their correspondences in ourselves, the awakening of those universal processes in terms of our own latent capacities, in order that we may better serve our fellow man. Giving emphasis to this, H.P.B. stated in the Preliminary Memorandum of the Esoteric Section: "Disappointment is sure to come to those who have joined this section for the purpose of learning 'magic arts' or acquiring 'occult training' for themselves . . . Forgetfulness of the *personal* self and sincere altruism are the first and indispensable requisites in the training of those who are to become Adepts in this or a future incarnation." And she adds the most provocative statement: "No Master of Wisdom from the East will himself appear or send anyone to Europe or America . . . until the year 1975," and this will depend "on those who have reached a certain point of psychic and spiritual development capable of serving humanity." She concludes by pointing out that "the attitude of mind in which the teachings given are to be received is that which shall tend to develop the faculty of intuition."[3] So it seems to me that in considering the Third Object, in relation to the developments within the Society itself in its early years, as H.P.B. indicated the direction the work was intended to take, we are not just talking about investigating or acquiring a certain knowledge or understanding of universal processes, but of coming, through a developing intuition, to a direct perception of those universals in terms of their reflections in man's own inherent capacities, our own immortal and deific powers.

In 1889, one year after the founding of the Esoteric Section and the establishment of the Third Object as it is now worded, as well as one year after the publication of *The Secret Doctrine,* H.P.B. published what may be termed her last major work on Theosophy (exclusive, that is, of *The Voice of the Silence,* which is in quite another category and whose exploration is not within the province of this talk), *The Key to Theosophy.* In that work, H.P.B. replies to the inquiry about the Objects of the Society with the statement: "They are three, and have been so from the beginning."[4]

Now this is an interesting statement for, as we have just shown, while there was quite a development in the Objects and there were not three clearly defined objectives at the inception of the organization, evidently in H.P.B.'s mind there was always a threefold nature to the Society's aim. She continues, in *The Key to Theosophy,* with the statement of the Third Object as "To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially."[5] Asked to explain this Object further, she adds: "This has to be achieved . . . by means of publications, in those places where no lectures and personal teachings are possible. Our duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. To oppose and counteract—after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature—bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in miracles or anything supernatural. What we have to do is to seek to obtain *knowledge* of all the laws of nature, and to diffuse it. To encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, the so-called Occult Sciences, *based on the true knowledge of nature* instead of, as at present, on *superstitious beliefs based on blind faith and authority.* Popular folk-lore and traditions, however fanciful at times, when sifted may lead to the discovery of long-lost, but important, secrets of nature. The Society, therefore, aims at pursuing this line of inquiry, in the hope of

widening the field of scientific and philosophical observation."[6]

One can easily recognize in the above quotation phrases similar to if not precisely the same as those appearing in the various rewordings of the Rules and Objects in the official documents of the Society quoted earlier. One can also recognize the close interlinking of the Three Objects as each was intended to sustain and support the other in the study that would lead to the establishment of a firm realization of a universal fraternity.

NOW I would like to suggest that as a consequence of the history as reviewed briefly in the preceding statements, the Third Object is really most closely related to what has been called the *implied,* or unwritten, objective, that object or purpose indicated by the very title of the Society, "Theosophical." For I would propose that the Third Object specifically has to do with both a way of knowing or a body of knowledge, which may be called Theosophy, and a way of living which may be designated theosophical. We can take the Third Object in its two aspects, referring first to nature and second to man, and see that there is a close interrelationship between these two aspects. The word "and" is consequently a most significant word in this Object, for it points directly to the law of correspondences to which I have already referred or, as it has also been called, the law of analogy. H.P.B. has said that "Analogy is the guiding law of nature, the only true Ariadne's thread that can lead us through the inextricable paths of her domain, toward her primal and final mysteries."[7] Following this law, we may say, consequently, that whatever is found in the laws of nature must be expressed or reflected in the capacities of man.

We are dealing, then, with a certain way of knowing, by which we do not mean the accumulation of intellectual knowledge or the collection of miscellaneous facts, but a process of inner comprehension. It is a way referred to in *The Mahatma Letters* by the statement made to Mr. A. P. Sinnett that until "the neophyte attains to the condition necessary for that degree of Illumination to which, and for which, he is entitled and fitted, most *if not all* of the Secrets are *incommunicable.* . . . The illumination *must come from within.*"[8] Therefore, the two parts of the Third Object are so interlinked that one cannot come to the way of knowing implied by an understanding of laws of nature, until and unless one has awakened those latent capacities within by which the universals are perceived. The word "and" in the Third Object is the bridge, a very important bridge, linking the universals in nature with the particulars as expressed in man. There is not a casual putting together of two dissimilar subjects—"unexplained laws of nature" and "powers latent in man"—but a combining of two exact complementaries. The way of knowing must be expressed in a way of living, which is the constant expression of those capacities latent within us, revealing knowledge—soul knowledge—and which make known to us or which produce in us that inner illumination that is true enlightenment.

Now, of course, there are other important words in the Third Object, and we need to consider each word carefully if we are to grasp as fully as possible the meaning and intent of this Object. The Object begins with the words: "To investigate." What does it mean to investigate? We may note that the word itself derives from a word that means to trace out or to track out, for the original Latin, *vestigium,* referred to a track, specifically a foot-track. The implication of this should be quite meaningful to us, for I believe what is implied is that we are to walk a certain path to our own Divinity by understanding the laws which are inherent in the universe, by living them out in daily experience. These laws, it is suggested, are "unexplained," but our minds want everything explained, and we may feel uncomfortable with this word "unexplained" and therefore shy away from the Third Object because it takes some kind of courage, some kind of foolhardiness almost, to track out anything that is unexplained. But to explain means simply to spread out flat, on a plane or "planus" as the Latin gives it, and so unexplained may be said to mean that which is incapable of being spread out or flattened. The laws of nature are unfolded from within; they are inherent in the universal processes of manifestation, but they are revealed through man who is, as we are so often reminded, the measure of all things. Therefore, I would stress again that unexplained laws of nature are not necessarily undiscovered or unknown laws, although they may be undiscovered by science and unknown to philosophy; they are, rather,

those universal laws beyond explanation, which is the flattening process of the concrete mind. They are the universal laws revealed to him and through him who seeks the wisdom by a life lived in accordance with the ancient rules described in all the great religious scriptures of the world as essential for the would-be disciple.

Perhaps we may indulge in a little play on words by referring to the fact that *planus,* from which the English word "explain" is derived, means level or flat, a one-surface area. Consequently, we might propose that "unexplained" means far from flat; it is far from a level footpath on which we are traveling. We are walking straight up a mountain, as it were. The footpath is rugged, as anyone knows who tries to lead the occult life; the way is far from easy when one attempts to live truly out of one's own conviction, out of the constant renewal and transformation of oneself from within. "The road winds uphill all the way," as H.P.B. reminds us.[9]

So, to repeat, the laws of nature with which we are concerned in the Third Object—and I believe *The Secret Doctrine* verifies this—are not external laws; they are not laws imposed upon nature or upon man from without. They are the laws inherent in the very processes of manifestation, and this is why they are unexplained and remain unexplained. They cannot be grappled with by the mind, or by that aspect of the mind that seeks to have everything spread out flat on pages of print; they can only be revealed as the powers latent within us are unfolded. Consequently, it is the Third Object that opens up before us the vast field of occult science with specific knowledge of the fundamental realities upon which the entire system, an entire universe, is based. We must keep in mind that man is not excluded from these processes, or laws, because the proper understanding of man reveals the fullness of law in operation.

It is suggested throughout *The Secret Doctrine,* and in other theosophical works, that man himself is the revealer of the universal processes. As H.P.B. points out: "Evolution is *an eternal cycle of becoming,* we are taught; and Nature never leaves an atom unused. Moreover, from the beginning of the Round, all in Nature tends to become Man. All the impulses of the dual, centripetal and centrifugal Force are directed towards one point—MAN."[10] Man is the Alpha and Omega of objective creation, so that everything in the universe is reflected in him and it is he who makes conscious the entire process.

There is described, in *The Secret Doctrine,* the magnificent moment when, the stage being set, the time being ripe for the bursting forth of a new manvantaric day, all of the potencies, all of the energies necessary for the work to be carried on during that day stand revealed. We cannot sketch out in detail the emergence of a universe, and that is not our purpose here, but we may say that it is as though an entire system is wound up from within until a bursting point has been reached and then what was previously infolded now emerges in the processes of unfoldment. Just before this wonderful moment is described, however, we are given what I believe is a most important clue necessary for our comprehension of the entire process. Shloka 1 of Stanza 4, in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* dealing with cosmogenesis, opens with the words: "Listen, ye Sons of the Earth, to your instructors, the Sons of the Fire." These words suggest that a deeply mystical wisdom is about to be imparted, transmitted, and that, in effect, the universal process which is about to be set in motion once again, after the pralaya, is not one which can be explained or set forth in terms of chemical combinations, biological processes or mathematical formulae, but while including all of these aspects measurable by science, it is essentially a process, knowledge of which is transmitted from system to system by Divine Instructors. Then the shloka continues: "Learn there is neither first nor last; for all is ONE Number issued from NO-NUMBER."[11]

Commenting on this shloka, Sri Krishna Prem and Sri Madhava Ashish in *Man, the Measure of All Things* point out so beautifully: "The Sons of Fire are the teachings themselves. They exist in the very structure of the Universal Mind . . . That which is 'written' in the Universal Mind is true just because it *is* the Universal Mind, the Consciousness which embraces the *whole* of the manifested cosmos. All that happens in this or any other world happens within that universal consciousness, and he who can gain access to its 'pages' wins omniscience."[12] Our task, as the humanity of this world period, is to actualize in Self-consciousness the contents of the Universal Mind, to read in our lives the eternal truths written within the Consciousness that embraces the universal process. This would be impossible

were it not that we have direct access to that all-embracing consciousness. As Prem and Ashish state in further comment on the first shloka of Stanza 4: "If the Universal Mind were something 'up there,' something far away in unapproachable god-like remoteness, it would no doubt be true that its knowledge could be of little avail to us 'down here.' But it is not so. The Universal Mind is not at all away 'up there': it is here and now. Neither beyond the starry skies nor yet on far off mystic planes of being must that Universal Mind be sought, but in ourselves. We are motes of dust dancing within its Light which surrounds us everywhere. More, it pervades us through and through. We are but moments of that Light: it is our very Self. Inside and outside we are nothing but that Light; even our outer structure is the impress of its thought, and it is for this reason that, in actual truth, man is the measure of all things and contains within himself–even within his physical body–all the wonders of the universe."[13] How magnificently the Third Object points to this essential truth, linking as it does the laws of nature with the powers latent in man as the target of our exploration and investigation.

SO in the emergence of a manifested system, the unfolding of the universal process for another manvantaric day, there comes that dramatic moment recorded in shloka 3 or Stanza 4: "From the effulgency of light–the ray of the ever-darkness–sprang in space the re-awakened Energies . . . And these are: the essences, the flames, the elements, the builders, the numbers, the arupa, the rupa and the force, or Divine Man–the Sum Total . . ."[14] Man, the Divine Paradigm, the Heavenly Man, Archetypal Man: this is the totality that embraces all the energies that constitute a manifested universe; everything in nature strives toward the realization of the man-stage.

In *The Secret Doctrine* a marvelous word or concept is applied to the thrust that reawakens these energies, the dynamism of Reality itself; that word is Fohat. It is Fohat, says H. P. B., that impresses upon the manifested system the laws of nature. The system is then, as it were, lit up from within; it is, to use a technical term, *Chidakasa,* the field of primordial consciousness. But–and this is a most important and significant point in the whole philosophy–within that field there is not just a miscellany of energies, elements, forces, like so many scattered billiard balls on a table; rather we may say that energy is polarized, permitting all the magic play of the "ten thousand things" to come into being, held within the perfect relationship of law, the primary law of interrelatedness, since there can be nothing outside the Universal Mind or Consciousness. That magic play has been given a name also, but it is a term most misunderstood, I feel, and which, unfortunately, there is not time here to clarify fully. It is *maya* which is the dynamism (the Sanskrit term is *shakti*) by which the Universal Mind measures itself out in appearance; Reality becomes the appearances of the manifold; the One becomes the manynesses, none of which truly reflects the One in its wholeness, but all of which hint at the existence of the One. That dynamism is reflected in one of the great powers of man himself–the capacity to imagine, and therefore to create by imagination. Here again we have a wonderful hint at the manner in which the universal ("unexplained laws of nature") may be reflected in the particular ("powers latent in man").

The polarization of energy within the universal system gives rise to a primal relationship, a relationship reflected at every stage of manifestation. Turning again to *The Secret Doctrine,* we find this relationship described by a very familiar word, *karma:* " . . . at the first flutter of renascent life, Svabhavat, *'the Mutable Radiance of the Immutable Darkness unconscious in Eternity,'* passes, at every new rebirth of Kosmos, from an inactive state into one of intense activity; that it differentiates, and then begins its work through differentiation. This work is KARMA. . . . The one Cosmic Atom becomes seven Atoms on the plane of Matter, and each is transformed into a centre of energy; that same Atom becomes seven Rays on the plane of Spirit; and the seven creative Forces of Nature, radiating from the Root-Essence . . . follow, one the right, the other the left path, separate till the end of the Kalpa, and yet in close embrace. What unites them? KARMA."[15]

The laws of nature as revealed throughout the manifested cosmos could be explored and commented on much further; they are essentially "unexplained" however until man gives them expression in his conscious existence, for the divine purpose cannot really be effected except through man, as is emphasized again and again

throughout *The Secret Doctrine.* Let us turn, then, to a closer examination of the second aspect of the Third Object: "the powers latent in man." The entry of the universal into the particular comes, as we have already suggested, through man, but it may be said to be a kind of vertical entrance, from Mahat or Universal Mind focused through or into Manas. Just as in the first set of Stanzas upon which the cosmogenesis delineated in *The Secret Doctrine* is based, there is a dramatic moment of the emergence of a universal system symbolized by the Heavenly Man, so in the second set of Stanzas, describing anthropogenesis, there is a dramatic moment when the stage is set for conscious man to enter. So many efforts to create man have failed; the story is a rather sad and tragic one. At last we come to a point where something seems possible; in shloka 17 of Stanza 4, we read: "The Breath needed a Form; the Fathers gave it. The Breath needed a Gross Body; the Earth moulded it. The Breath needed the Spirit of Life; the Solar Lhas breathed it into its Form. The Breath needed a Mirror of its Body; 'We gave it our own!' said the Dhyanis. The Breath needed a Vehicle of Desires; 'It has it!' said the Drainer of Waters. But Breath needs a Mind to embrace the Universe . . . "[16] And all the hierarchies are stumped! They are stunned, quite literally; not one of the great hierarchies preceding man can give this thing that is necessary, essential for the full self-conscious realization of the Universal Creative Logos. There is, as it were, a great wringing of hands, a tremendous consternation and bewilderment; who—what power in the universe—can give this most needed gift: "a Mind to embrace the Universe"? It is not to be given; *it must be won!* "The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric Philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit . . . "[17]

Now what kind of mind is this—a mind that will embrace the universe, that will contain in total consciousness the universals of wisdom? Obviously it is not the intellect which can dissect, analyze, record, document and do all the other fantastic, and truly remarkable, tasks which have produced our technological and computerized culture. We are not speaking of the mind which is capable of slaying Reality (of which *The Voice of the Silence* speaks), that mind that can cut up the Real into the ten thousand appearances of the phenomenal world. Rather it is that pure Manas stretched open to receive the influx of universal light, able to body forth the archetypes of Universal Mind, reflecting the creative richness of the Supreme Consciousness.

There is a saying attributed to the Lord Buddha: "To produce love in one's mind for a single moment is a more commendable deed than to distribute among the poor thrice a day a hundred pots of food." What a power, latent within each one of us, is this: to be able to produce such love in one's mind for a single moment that we shall have transformed the *lives*—not just the existences—of our fellow men! We may say: "This is very easy. I have only to sit quietly and *think* love." But we are not just to think some emotion, to cogitate on some sentimental feeling; we are exhorted to *produce* love, which is to say, to develop that mind which can indeed embrace the universe, for it is a mind illumined from within, that perceives truly through all the distortions of appearances the one primal Reality, the One Life, universally present everywhere. This mind has been called *manas taijasi,* the mind lit up from within by that consciousness which is *buddhi,* so that nothing is opaque to it; nor is it opaque, shadowed, at any point. The production of such a mind was the enlightenment of the Lord Buddha; the production of such a mind enabled the Christ to say, even on the cross, "I and my Father are One." All the other powers of man, such capacities as the psychic, which are not truly human since they are shared with the animal kingdom, are as nothing compared with this supreme and most splendid power—the production of love, the evocation of compassion, in the mind; it is this alone that can give the mind that will embrace the universe, for it will heal the universe, returning it to its wholeness, self-conscious in the glorious realization of the Heavenly Man made manifest.

You will remember that, in the early days of the Society, Mr. A. P. Sinnett importuned H.P.B. to put him in touch with the Mahatmas who were her Teachers. She finally did this and transmitted to the Mahatma K.H. a letter written by Mr. Sinnett. Thus began the correspondence which opened a channel of communication for sharing some of the ideals and principles of the Occult Sciences. This correspondence, published as *The Mahatma Letters to A.*

P. Sinnett, may be said to elaborate the Third Object, for the Letters give both principles of the esoteric philosophy touching on "unexplained laws of nature" and hints on the awakening of those inner perceptions–"the powers latent in man"–which are necessary for the comprehension of the wisdom. In the very first letter from the Mahatma K.H., in response to Mr. Sinnett's request for a display of phenomena which, it was suggested, would silence the critics and skeptics, the Mahatma directed attention to "those deepest and most mysterious questions which can stir the human mind–the *deific* powers in man and the possibilities contained in nature."[18] The path to the awakening of those powers lies within; it is the path that must ultimately be taken by each individual alone. In *The Voice of the Silence* it is spoken of as the Paramita path, the way of the transcendental virtues, a rugged path that winds uphill: "its foot in mire, its summit lost in glorious light nirvanic" with "ever-narrowing portals on the hard and thorny way to Jnana." The first portal is called "Dana, the key of charity and love immortal." To enter, we are told, "thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in Self."[19]

Along the way, we may pay attention to all sorts of odd facts, the miscellaneous furniture of the phenomenal world–hypnotism, thought transference, poltergeists, dreams, psychic adventures of one kind or another–all the things that taken separately are curious, often inexplicable, but that have no real bearing upon the important issues of life. They are, as one writer has so graphically described them, "the flotsam and jetsam of the outer world," the shadows of a deeper reality toward which we must ever move and on which we must learn to focus all our attention.

The Third Object opens before us, then, the excitement of exploring, behind and beyond the manifoldness of the universe, the eternal laws which sustain creation, and the supreme joy of walking that path to the unfoldment of our own divinity, the realization of those deific powers which can alone reveal that divinity in the midst of all our daily existences.

References

1. *A Short History of The Theosophical Society* by Josephine Ransom, pp.76-77
2. For the various changes in wording of the Objects and Rules of the Society, see *ibid.*, pp. 545 *et seq.*
3. All references to the Preliminary Memorandum of the Esoteric Section are to the publication of this document in *The Original Programme of The Theosophical Society* by H. P. Blavatsky, pp. 61-75.
4. *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky, Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1933 reprint of 2nd ed. (1890), p. 30
5. *ibid.*, p. 30
6. *ibid.*, pp. 36-37
7. *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky, Adyar ed., vol. 3, p. 161
8. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* Transcribed and Compiled by A. T. Barker, 2nd ed., p. 283
9. Blavatsky, *op cit.*, vol. 1, p. 311
10. *ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 177
11. *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 150
12. *Man, the Measure of All Things* by Sri Krishna Prem and Sri Madhava Ashish, p. 202
13. *ibid.*, pp. 202-203
14. Blavatsky, *op cit.*, vol. 1, p. 152
15. *ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 359-360
16. *ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 113
17. *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 83
18. Barker, *op cit.*, p. 2
19. *The Voice of the Silence* by H. P. Blavatsky, Theosophical Publishing House, London, p. 68.